

## Bangkok Highlights: Tuesday, 4 September 2018

On Tuesday, the Bangkok Climate Change Conference commenced with an opening ceremony, followed by establishment of negotiating groups under the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI), and the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on the Paris Agreement (APA). In the afternoon, the APA contact group met, and several informal consultations and contact groups convened under the SBSTA, SBI and APA.

### Opening Ceremony

Stressing that the need for an additional session in Bangkok reflects a lack of progress, COP 23 President Frank Bainimarama called on parties to agree to a package of decisions to ensure the Paris Agreement's full implementation.

Incoming COP 24 President Michał Kurtyka called on delegates to show that governments are keeping pace with society, urging them to leave Bangkok with a clear understanding of what will be negotiated in Katowice.

Welcoming delegates to Bangkok, Surasak Karnjanarat, Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, Thailand, stressed that "climate change is a threat to be dealt with now."

In a video message, UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed warned that climate change is moving faster than efforts to address it, as evidenced by an unprecedented suite of extreme weather events worldwide.

Kaveh Zahedi, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), highlighted cooperation with the UNFCCC to promote climate action in the region.

UNFCCC Executive Secretary Patricia Espinosa urged progress towards finalizing the Paris Agreement's implementation guidelines.

### SBSTA Opening

SBSTA Chair Paul Watkinson (France) opened the session. Noting uneven and insufficient progress, he pledged to work with the SBI and APA Chairs to ensure comparable progress on all items. He expressed hope that delegates would manage to consider at least one, and perhaps two, iterations of text on SBSTA items at this meeting.

**Organizational Matters:** SBSTA 48-2 adopted the agenda (FCCC/SBSTA/2018/5) and agreed to the organization of work.

The following items were referred to contact groups:

- Modalities, work programme, and functions under the Agreement of the forum on response measures, convened jointly with the SBI;

- Matters relating to Agreement Article 6 (market and non-market approaches); and
  - Accounting of financial resources provided through public interventions under Agreement Article 9.7.
- The following items were referred to informal consultations:
- Adaptation Committee's report, convened jointly with the SBI; and
  - Technology framework under Agreement Article 10.4.

In closing, Chair Watkinson noted two challenges: producing draft texts on all PAWP items in a coordinated manner; and the limited time available.

### SBI Opening

SBI Chair Emmanuel Dlamini (eSwatini) opened the session. Noting the importance of leaving Bangkok with draft negotiating text, he said he would meet with groups and heads of delegation to identify possible ways forward on key issues.

**Organizational Matters:** SBI 48-2 adopted the agenda (FCCC/SBI/2018/10) and agreed to the organization of work.

**Public Registry Referred to in Agreement Article 4.12 (NDC Registry):** Chair Dlamini proposed holding a session for joint discussion on the NDC registry and the public registry referred to in Agreement Article 7.12 (adaptation communication). SAUDI ARABIA, INDIA, and Iran, for the LIKE-MINDED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (LMDCs), supported the proposal. Questioning whether such discussions would be helpful, SWITZERLAND opposed. The Chair will continue consultations.

The following items were referred to informal consultations:

- Common timeframes for NDCs;
- NDC registry;
- Adaptation communication registry;
- Adaptation Committee's report, together with matters relating to the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), to be considered jointly with the SBSTA;
- Scope of and modalities for the periodic assessment of the Technology Mechanism; and
- Information to be provided by parties in accordance with Agreement Article 9.5 (developed countries' biennial *ex ante* financial communications).

### APA Opening

**Organizational Matters:** APA Co-Chair Sarah Baashan (Saudi Arabia) opened the session. Parties agreed to continue work under the APA 1 agenda (FCCC/APA/2018/1) and the existing organization of work (FCCC/APA/2016/2). Co-Chair Baashan said the APA Co-Chairs will hold bilateral consultations with parties and groups, noting that the SBSTA and SBI Chairs could be included on issues of joint interest, such as the format of the PAWP outcome at COP 24.

### **SBI, SBSTA, and APA Joint Plenary**

No opening statements were heard: parties and observers agreed instead to upload their statements to the UNFCCC website.

### **Contact Groups and Informal Consultations**

**APA Contact Group:** APA Co-Chair Tyndall outlined the organization of work, highlighted the joint reflections note prepared by the APA, SBSTA, and SBI Presiding Officers, and stressed the need to make optimal use of time. Delegates agreed to forward all substantive APA items to informal consultations. Party statements will be uploaded on the UNFCCC website.

### **Accounting of Financial Resources Provided through Public Interventions under Agreement Article 9.7:**

Discussions were co-chaired by Delphine Eyraud (France) and Seyni Nafo (Mali). Parties discussed a submission by a developing country group and another submission by several developed countries. They mandated the Co-Chairs to merge the two submissions into a “hybrid text” that moves towards decision text. Several parties urged the Co-Chairs to be mindful of how draft decision text will fit into placeholders under APA item 5 (transparency framework). Another group of parties expressed discomfort with discussions about merging text with the transparency framework, but maintained support for the effort to combine the submissions.

**Matters Related to Article 6 (Market and Non-Market Approaches):** Co-Chairs Kelley Kizzier (Ireland) and Hugh Sealy (Barbados) asked parties to differentiate between those elements of the 8 May informal notes that they see as essential to a decision in Katowice and those that could be subject to further work thereafter.

Under Article 6.2 (cooperative approaches), many parties and groups identified the following issues, among others, as “essential”:

- participation requirements;
- rules on corresponding adjustments and scope with respect to NDCs;
- defining internationally transferred mitigation outcomes (ITMOs); and
- rules to ensure environmental integrity.

Under Article 6.4 (mechanism), many urged sufficient elaboration of procedures to allow the supervisory body to start work after COP 24. Delegates also noted the importance of, *inter alia*:

- transition arrangements;
- defining sustainable development; and
- rules on share of proceeds, and on baselines and overall mitigation.

Many urged that the work programme under Article 6.8 (non-market approaches) should start in 2019.

The Co-Chairs will publish revised informal notes for each of this item’s three sub-items for consideration on Wednesday, and further revisions by the end of the week.

**Common Timeframes for NDCs:** Co-Facilitator Marianne Karlsen (Norway) suggested, and parties agreed, that the Co-Facilitators develop a paper to guide discussions. One developing country noted that negotiations on this item do not need to be completed at COP 24, while another country suggested a COP 24 decision could agree to introduce common timeframes, with details to be elaborated in subsequent negotiations. Some countries suggested that the note reflect, among other issues:

- links between common timeframes, and the NDC and global stocktake cycles;
- options for the length of timeframes;
- the date when the common timeframes would start; and
- the distinction between common timeframes and common implementation timelines.

Informal consultations will continue on Wednesday.

### **Public Registry Referred to in Agreement Article 7.12**

**(Adaptation Communication):** Co-Facilitator Peer Stiansen (Norway) invited views, recalling the mandate to develop an agreed basis for negotiations. Two groups urged a joint session with discussions on the NDC registry. Co-Facilitator Stiansen recalled that the SBI Chair is conducting consultations. Some countries noted a link between the registries if NDCs are the vehicle for adaptation communication, while others noted the “unique” challenge that there are multiple vehicles for adaptation communication, including NDCs, national adaptation plans (NAPs), and national communications. Informal consultations will continue.

### **Further Guidance in Relation to the Adaptation**

**Communication:** Co-Facilitator Julio Cordano (Chile) asked for general views on the Co-Chairs’ tool, underlining the aim to identify clear options. All parties expressed support for the tool as a basis of further negotiations. Parties provided comments on the draft decision, focusing on sections of the tool that outline how text can be streamlined or structured. On the preamble, one group suggested moving some of the text to sections on principles or purpose, while other countries suggested items that could be removed. Informal consultations continued in the evening.

**Committee to Facilitate Implementation and Promote Compliance:** In informal consultations facilitated by Janine Coye-Felson (Belize) and Christina Voigt (Norway), delegates welcomed the APA Co-Chairs’ tool as a basis for further work and expressed general reflections on its content. Many supported leaving certain issues to be decided by the committee itself in developing its rules of procedure, rather than reaching agreement in Katowice, although there was no consensus on which aspects should be deferred. Another proposal to simplify the tool, supported by several, was to group elements on “process” under each option to trigger the committee’s work, instead of under a separate heading. Informal consultations will continue.

**Further Matters Except the Adaptation Fund:** Parties discussed the APA Co-Chairs’ tool, and the order in which agenda items will be addressed during this session. Views diverged on the tool’s options for Agreement Article 9.5 (biennial *ex ante* finance communications by developed countries), which specify either making a recommendation to the CMA; or not doing so. A number of developing country groups stressed the need for a decision, while several developed countries noted that the issue is sufficiently addressed under the SBI. One developing country group, supported by another, suggested bracketing the option for no recommendation. Parties also disagreed on ways to continue the discussion. Informal consultations will continue.

### **In the Corridors**

Delegates were greeted with reprimands on the first day of the Bangkok climate conference, as they were pointedly told that progress on the Paris Agreement Work Programme (PAWP) had thus far been insufficient and uneven. The Bureau, according to one delegate, “further ramped up the pressure” by asking parties to complete two iterations of many draft texts to have draft decisions as ready as possible for Poland. Appearing to take these admonishments to heart, the SBSTA, SBI, and APA launched their work smoothly. Despite initial concerns that the tools provided under the APA “could balloon” in informal consultations, parties constrained the impulse, engaging in identifying options and suggesting ways to streamline or move text in the draft decisions. That all parties agreed that the tools, so far, could form the basis of further negotiations was to many “an early win.” Nevertheless, with only six days of meeting time left before COP 24, few could disagree with the APA Co-Chair that delegates would have to “eat, sleep, and dream” the PAWP here in Bangkok to fulfill their mandate in December.